THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

BENGALURU • WEDNESDAY • MARCH 05, 2025 • ₹9.00 • PAGES 20 • LATE CITY EDITION

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File photo

KUKI-ZO GROUPS DEFY SHAH FIAT, TO BLOCK FREE TRAVEL IN MANIPUR

The Committee on Tribal Unity (COTU) said no free movement would be permitted in Kuki-Zo areas until the community's aspirations are fulfilled

DEMAND SEPARATE U.T. WITH LEGISLATURE

The decision was part of an 'eight-point charter of resolution' adopted at an event on Monday. The resolution followed Home Minister Amit Shah's directive to security agencies to ensure free movement for people on all roads in Manipur from March 8. COTU said its demand for a separate Union Territory with legislature is non-negotiable and that protests will continue

MEITEI BODY SEEKS ACTION ON KUKI GROUP

- The Coordinating Committee on Manipur Integrity (COCOMI), an umbrella body of several civil society organisations of the Meiteis, demanded legal action against COTU for instigating violence
- Shah's order sought to lift the curbs on travel through the areas inhabited by both Meiteis and Kukis since ethnic violence broke out

250

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PEOPLE KILLED IN ETHNIC VIOLENCE IN THE STATE SINCE 2023

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

MILITARY AID PAUSE SOFTENS ZELENSKYY

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ New Delhi

THE Trump administration has suspended all US military aid to Ukraine, halting crucial shipments and increasing pressure on Kyiv to seek peace with Moscow, deepening the rift with Europe. The decision comes after the blow-up in the White House last week during which President Donald Trump, infuriated over Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's alleged 'disrespect and ingratitude', told him he was "gambling with a third world war". Zelenskyy was asked to come back "when he is ready for peace".

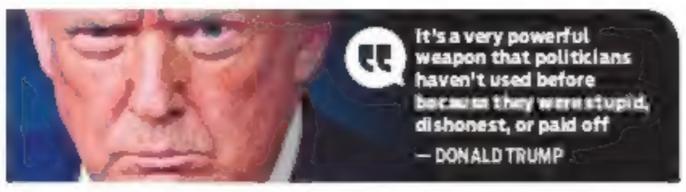
"The President has been clear he is focused on peace... We are pausing and reviewing our aid to ensure that it is contributing to a solution," a White House official said.

Reacting to the development, Zelenskyy said he wants to "make things right" with Trump. "Our meeting in Washington on Friday did not go as planned. It is regrettable that it happened this way. It's time to make things right. We want future cooperation and communication to be constructive," he posted on X.

Meanwhile, EU leaders announced a $841-billion plan to defend European countries and boost Ukraine's security. Twenty-seven EU leaders will meet in Brussels on Thursday to discuss the package.

Since the start of the Ukraine-Russia conflict in 2022, the US has provided $65.9 billion in military aid to Kyiv. Further contributions are uncertain after Trump ordered a pause on aid, affecting deliveries of ammunition, vehicles, and other equipment, including shipments previously agreed upon under Joe Biden's presidency.

The US decision further deepens the rift between the Trump administration and Europe, as what the State Department described as the US' "unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity" is now under threat.


It's a very powerful weapon that politicians haven't used before because they were stupid, dishonest, or paid off
— DONALD TRUMP

Global trade war begins as high US tariffs kick in

Canada, China hit back with extra tariffs on US imports; Mexico to respond on Sunday

JUSTIN TRUDEAU, CANADIAN PM

So today, the US launched a trade war against Canada, their closest partner and ally, their closest friend

CLAUDIA SHEINBAUM MEXICAN PREZ

The US' unilateral decision affects our people and firms operating in the country

BENN KOCHUVEEDAN @ Mumbai

THE global trade war has officially begun with US President Donald Trump's new 25% tariffs on imports from Canada and Mexico, and an enhanced 20% duty on Chinese goods, taking effect on Tuesday.

Trump said the tariffs on Canada and Mexico are "to combat the extraordinary threat to US national security, including public health posed by unchecked trafficking" of lethal drugs such as fentanyl and nitazene synthesis, which could kill 9.5 million Americans. According to the White House, 68% of all drug poisoning deaths in 2022 and 2023 were caused by synthetic opioids, primarily fentanyl.

In 2024, Mexico's exports to the US were $506 billion and the total bilateral trade was $839.9 billion. The US exported $334 billion to Mexico, making it America's top trading partner for the second consecutive year in 2024. The US had a trade deficit of $171.8 billion. Mexico is the biggest supplier of passenger cars to the US, with 23% of all US car imports.

China's total trade with the US was $582.4 billion in 2024, while the US exports to China was only $143.5 billion and imports were $438.9 billion, causing a trade deficit of $295.4 billion.

In 2024, Canada exported 75.9% of all its goods to the US worth $410 billion, led by $107 billion in crude oil alone, and leaving it with a merchandise trade surplus of $102.3 billion.

The tariff war has put global markets on edge and triggered retaliations by the affected nations. China and Canada—the US' second largest trading partner and third largest source market, respectively—announced equal retaliatory tariffs. Mexico—the largest source market for the US and the largest auto supplier—said it would announce counter tariffs shortly.

Canada announced a 25% tariff on $107 billion worth of US goods, while China slapped an additional 15% tariff on US farm goods like corn and soybeans.

With the additional duties, the average effective US tariff rate on Chinese goods has hit 33%, up from around 13% before Trump began his latest term in January, according to an analysis by Nomura.

GLOBAL MARKETS TUMBLE

1.41% Dow Jones Indl Avg

1.20% Nikkei Index

1.29% S&P 500 Index

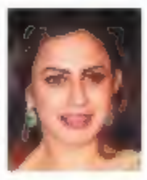
Updated till 12.10 AM

IPS officer's daughter caught smuggling gold

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bengaluru

KANNADA actress **Ranya Rao**, said to be the daughter of a serving senior IPS officer, was arrested by the Directorate of Revenue Intelligence (DRI) at Kempegowda International Airport (KIA) on Monday night for allegedly smuggling 14.8 kg gold from Dubai into the city.

Airport sources said the actress alighted from an Emirates flight at T2 on Monday night when she was held while passing through the immigration clearance section.



Rao had worn the gold on her person and hidden it inside the clothing she was wearing too, they said.

Since she had visited Dubai multiple times within a span of 15 days, intelligence officials had kept her under surveillance, said a source.

Elaborating on her modus operandi, a source said that whenever she arrived at the airport, she would seek the support of local police, claiming that she was the daughter of a DGP. They would arrive and escort her out of the airport.

Rao was taken to the DRI Headquarters at HBR Layout on Tuesday. She was produced before the 42nd Additional Sessions Court in the city.

"A case has been filed against her under different sections of the Customs Act and Customs officials have taken her into custody," said a top cop.

The value of the gold she has smuggled would roughly be worth Rs 12.5 crore.

DESERT STORM: INDIA IN FINAL

GOMESH S @ Chennai

Shreyas Iyer (L) & Virat Kohli added 91 runs for the third wicket against Australia in Champions Trophy semifinal | AP

AND just like that India are in yet another ICC event final. Their fourth in as many events in the last two years, second in a 50-over global event. But this Champions Trophy will feel special. On the other side were the Australians. Though naysayers might say it's a team without three of their frontline bowlers, yet it's still a grudge match after losing the 50-over World Cup final.

The Aussies are always the biggest threat. Even on Tuesday, they threatened to run away with the match with some sumptuous hitting after electing to bat. But India were not having any of the surprises this evening. They had all bases covered and once again played with four spinners on a slow wicket. Whenever a partnership was building, India managed to break it.

The wounds of World Test Championship final 2023 and the ODI World Cup 2023 to Border-Gavaskar Trophy 2024-25 are still fresh and any win would lead to some healing. The four-wicket win on the tricky Dubai surface once again showed why India have been dominating the shorter forms of cricket. Virat Kohli once again showed why he is the king of chase with a match-winning knock of 84. K L Rahul remained unbeaten on 42.

Aussie skipper Steve Smith and Alex Carey played one of the best innings they have on such a surface. Mohammed Shami was in his vintage best picking three wickets including that of Smith. When Aussies were all out for 264, the smile that vanished from skipper Rohit Sharma's face resurfaced. In the end, in the first ODI encounter between the two since the 2023 ODI WC final, India returned the favour. **P15**

EXPRESS INTAKE

Two held for offering fake RAW jobs | P3

5 bills tabled in K'taka Assembly | P4

EPS hints at alliance with BJP | P5

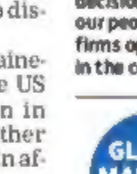
'Not going for Shehzadi's last rites' | P9

HC stays FIR against Buch, 5 others | P10

Maha minister Munde quits after murder heat

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

MAHARASHTRA minister Dhananjay Munde on Tuesday resigned after his close aide Walmik Karad was named the mastermind in the horrific abduction, torture and murder of Santosh Deshmukh, a sarpanch in Beed. Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis accepted his resignation and forwarded it to Governor C P Radhakrishnan.



Munde, 49, had represented the NCP led by deputy chief minister Ajit Pawar in the ministry. His vacancy could be filled by sulking party veteran Chhagan Bhujbal.

Gory images of Deshmukh, 45, tied to a vehicle and dragged for several kilometres went viral on social media. The assailants, including Karad, allegedly beat him with an iron rod, and when he asked for water, peed in his mouth. These photographs are part of the chargesheet submitted by the CID in a local court.

Deshmukh was murdered on December 9 after he tried to stop an extortion racket targeting Avaada, an energy firm. Seven accused, including Karad, have been arrested while one person is on the run.

CM puts brakes on Baldota steel plant

RAGHOTTAM KOPPAR @ Koppal

CHIEF Minister Siddaramaiah on Tuesday instructed the Koppal deputy commissioner to stop the preparatory work for a steel and power plant being set up by Baldota Steel and Power Limited near Koppal town.

Representatives from all political parties, members of the public and activists from environmental organisations met Siddaramaiah on Tuesday in Bengaluru and requested him to stop the work at the steel plant, stating that it would harm the environment in Koppa.

It was only last month that a memorandum of understanding was signed at the Global Investors' Meet to set up the plant at a cost of Rs 54,000 crore.

The residents complained that if the plant comes up, pollution will go up further as their town is already facing health hazards because of many industries.

CONTINUED ON: P5

In a first, NLSIU grad becomes judge in Canada

BANSY KALAPPA @ Bengaluru

IN a historic first for a lawyer qualified in India, Vasundhara Naik, a Bengalurean, has been appointed a judge at Canada's Family Court of Justice in Ontario. This shatters barriers and sets a precedent for internationally trained legal professionals to be absorbed into the Canadian judicial system.

Unlike previous Indian-origin judges in Canada, who were born, raised and educated there, Justice Naik was born and raised in India.

She honed her legal acumen at the prestigious National Law School of India University (NLSIU), Bengaluru before embarking on a legal career across India, Sweden, Singapore and Canada.

Sources said, "Justice Naik started off in New Delhi as a human rights and criminal defence lawyer, later specialising in intellectual property law at a boutique firm. Her expertise took her to Cisco Systems in India and then to Singapore, where she led brand protection strategies. In Canada, she co-founded Robins Naik LLP in Ottawa, where she became a formidable force in family, child protection, and adoption law." **P5**

It is a proud moment for the institution and for the entire Karnataka. She is a role model for generations to come

Prof S Japhet, visiting faculty member at NLSIU